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Position Paper 2014-02 State Veterans Cemeteries Staffing

1. **Objective:** To ensure that state veterans cemeteries have the staffing levels necessary to meet operational requirements
2. **Background:**
 - The Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) operates three state veterans cemeteries:
 - Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery (Suffolk);
 - Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Dublin);
 - Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Amelia).
 - Among other factors, cemetery staffing levels are a function of the number of memorial services performed and of the requirement to maintain an increasing number of gravesites.
 - The Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service of the University of Virginia completed a study in May 2013 titled “*Commemorating Military Service and Sacrifice in Virginia: An Analysis of Veteran Memorial Needs.*” The study projects an increase in the number of burials at state veterans cemeteries over the next decade, from 1,346 in Fiscal Year 2013 to 1,539 in Fiscal Year 2023.
3. **Discussion:**
 - State veterans cemeteries appear to have adequate staffing levels for state Fiscal Year (FY) 2014.
 - However, without an increase in staffing levels in FY 2015, DVS will be greatly challenged to perform an increasing number of burials and to maintain an increasing number of developed gravesites.
 - Two additional positions are required in FY 2015 to meet projected workloads. DVS should request these additional positions through the state budget process.
4. **Recommendation:** that the Governor and General Assembly authorize two additional positions for the state veterans cemeteries in FY15/16.

Adopted
July 24, 2013

Updated
January 6, 2014